



Understanding higher winter bills and upcoming cost adjustments

According to local meteorologist Nick Hausen, Southern Illinois experienced colder-than-average temperatures in both January and February. January was especially frigid, running about 5 degrees below average while bringing an ice storm and an extended stretch of single-digit temperatures. February wasn't much better, with bitter cold lingering throughout the month. The harshest morning arrived on Feb. 21, when temperatures across the area plummeted to as low as -4°F — the coldest reading since December 2023.

As a result, heating systems worked overtime to keep homes comfortable, which led to higher energy use and higher bills. No matter what type of heating system you have, it is working to compensate for the difference between indoor and outdoor temperatures. The greater the gap, the harder your system has to work, consuming more energy in the process. This is why electric bills tend to spike in the winter.

Rising costs beyond winter

As we move further into 2025, members may notice higher electric bills, even as temperatures rise. Several factors are contributing to these increased costs, including storm recovery from January's ice storm, which cost our cooperative more than \$715,000. Additionally, the cost to purchase electricity has risen, and anticipated tariffs are continuing to drive up the prices of essential materials and equipment. While these external factors impact overall expenses, we want to reassure our members that residential energy and delivery rates will remain unchanged from 2023 through 2025. However, adjustments to the residential demand,

Power Cost Adjustment (PCA) and Demand Cost Adjustment (DCA) will be necessary throughout the year to help offset these rising costs. For February usage/March bills, the PCA was adjusted from a -\$0.007/kilowatt-hour (kWh) credit to a -\$0.004/kWh credit.

Upcoming changes for March usage/April bills:

- The PCA will change from -0.004/kWh to -0.003/kWh.
- The DCA will change from \$0.005/kWh to \$0.006/kWh.
- There will be an increase in demand charges from \$0.10/kilowatt (kW) to \$0.25/kW.

Looking ahead, by August usage/September bills, the PCA is expected to adjust again to -\$0.001/kWh. By year's end, these combined adjustments will result in an estimated \$0.007/kWh increase for residential members. For an average household using 1,200 kWh per month, this translates to approximately \$8.40 more per month by late summer. **Kelsie Johnson**

Managing unexpected high bills

As a reminder, our cooperative offers several options to help manage costs and avoid unexpected high bills:

- If you feel unable to pay your full bill amount, please contact us to set up a **Payment Arrangement**.
- We have a **PrePay program** where you pay on your meter as you go. Payments can be made by cash or card. Call our office at 800-606-1505 to learn more about this option and sign up.

Continued on 18B ▶



Egyptian Electric
Cooperative Association
Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

1732 Finney Road
Murphysboro, IL 62966

Business hours/After hours
800-606-1505

24/7 Automated Pay-by-Phone
855-939-3675

Office hours 8 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. M-F
www.eeca.coop

Board of Directors

Kevin Liefer, President
Randall Campbell, Vice President
Kevin Bame, Secretary – Treasurer
Rick Asaturian
Paul Hicks
Mary Jo Homan
Ken Jarrett
Steve Prest
Paul Pyatt



Shane Hermetz
General Manager

Choose your payment option!

- At our office lobby, drive-thru, drop-box, or payment kiosk
- Mail to: 1732 Finney Road, Murphysboro, IL 62966
- Set up recurring bank draft or credit card payments
- Use SmartHub portal, online or mobile app
- By phone at 855-939-3675, using credit card or checking account
- Off-site kiosks located at 2301 N. Reed Station Parkway and 1815 W. Main in Carbondale

"Understanding higher winter bills" continued from 18A

- We offer **Budget Billing**, which evens out your monthly bill by using your 12-month average to create a more consistent payment. This would help make future budgeting easier. Please note: This is not a discounted method; it's just a different way to pay. Additional information and qualifications can be found at eeca.coop.
- The **Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)** helps with home energy bills for members who qualify, and applications are open through August 2025. Learn more at helpillinoisfamilies.com.

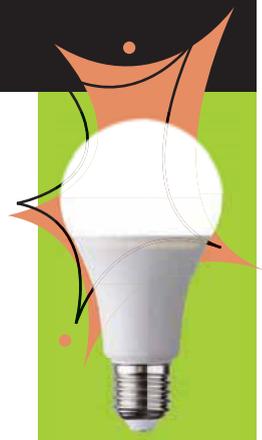
We will continue to monitor trends and provide updates as more information becomes available. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to reach out to us. We're here to help.



ENERGY EFFICIENCY

TIP OF THE MONTH

Turn your suds into savings. Lower your energy use in the laundry room by washing clothes with cold water whenever possible, as heating water accounts for most of the energy used in a laundry cycle. Wash full loads to make the most of energy savings, and use high-efficiency detergent designed for cold washes. For drying cycles, clean the lint filter before each load to improve airflow and use dryer balls to reduce drying time.



MEMBER PRIZES

Every month we will have three member names hidden throughout our Egyptian Electric News section. If you find your name, call our office and identify yourself and the page that it is on and you will win a \$10 credit on your next electric bill.



Coffee with the Co-op helps answer member questions about solar

Egyptian Electric Cooperative recently hosted two Coffee with the Co-op events to help members better understand solar energy and answer their questions. We had a great turnout at both Steam Coffee House in Sparta on Feb. 13 and Sunny Street Café in Carbondale on Feb. 20, and we appreciate everyone who joined us!

For members who missed the events, here are some key takeaways we want to share!

For current solar members

1. EECA recently mailed updated contracts to existing solar members, including a key change for grandfathered solar accounts. Schedule A-1 that was set to expire in 2026 has now been extended by our board of directors to be in effect for 25 years from the system's interconnection date.
2. EECA has updated its Net Metering Policy 515 and adopted Rate Rider 2 to provide payout opportunities for existing solar consumer-members. Under the original agreement, any unused banked kilowatt-hours (kWh) were erased and reset to zero in April or October, depending on the member's selection. Under our new amended agreement, members will be compensated for the excess energy their system produces through March of each year. Those who sign the updated

agreement will receive a bill credit for any excess generation their system produces once a year in April. Over production doesn't always occur, but if so, April bills would see any remaining banked balance converted and applied as a credit to the bill. If a member chooses not to sign the new agreement, the current agreement will continue to be in place with EECA, and banked kilowatt hours will be erased at the previously elected true-up month for 2025.

Donald Johnson

For members considering solar

1. Members should know that EECA recommends working with reputable local contractors instead of out-of-town companies that can often be misleading. We often hear from members who signed contracts under false pretenses. That's why we recommend calling EECA first before talking with a solar contractor or visiting our Solar FAQ page at eeca.coop.
2. We have helpful resources on our website that outline all of the things you should be asking and need to think about when considering solar. Please scan the QR codes below, which will take you to those materials on our website.

Important Questions to Ask BEFORE Signing a Solar Contract



Considering Solar? It's Complicated, But We Are Here to Help!



If you still have questions, please visit eeca.coop → on the menu, hover over Energy Solutions → and select either "Interconnections/Home Generation" or "Solar FAQ." Both pages have in-depth information to help our members make informed decisions and understand how to read their solar bill from EECA.

Plant Trees Safely

Before you dig, call 811 to locate buried utility lines.

LOW TREE ZONE

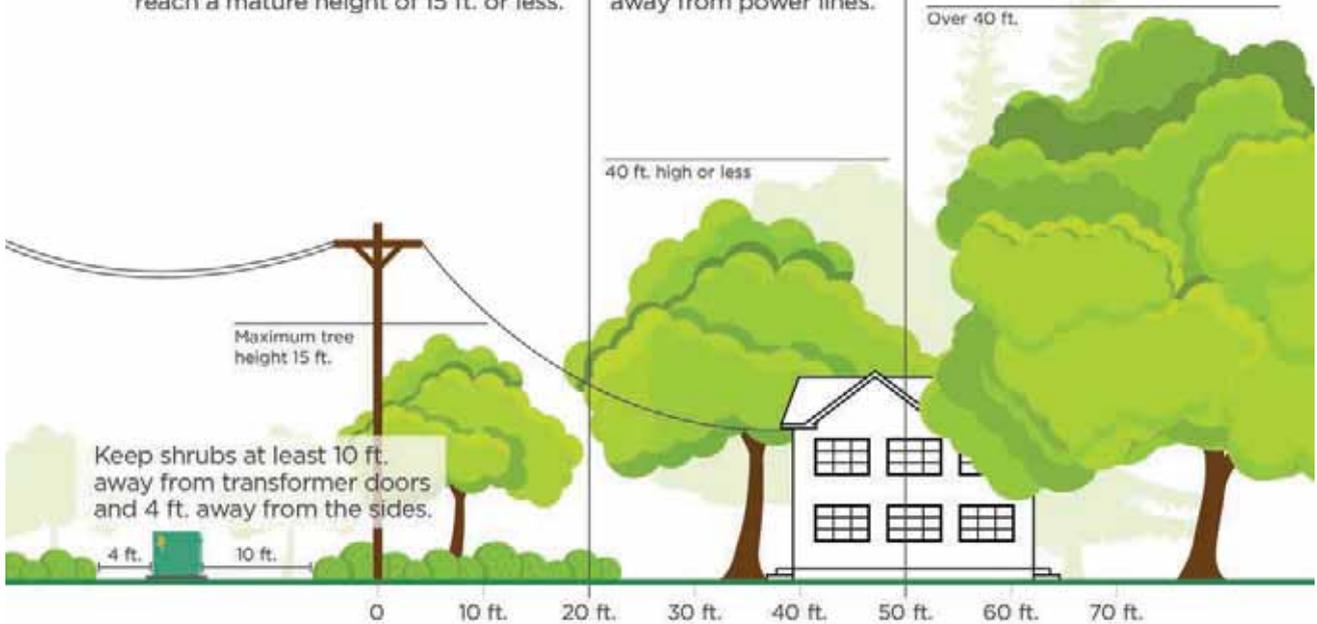
Avoid planting within 20 ft. of power lines. If planting is unavoidable, only plant shrubs and small trees that reach a mature height of 15 ft. or less.

MEDIUM TREE ZONE

Plant medium trees (under 40 ft. when mature) at least 25 ft. away from power lines.

LARGE TREE ZONE

Plant large trees (over 40 ft. when mature) at least 50 ft. away from power lines.



Our office will be closed April 18 for Good Friday.

— GIVE BLOOD —



BLOOD DRIVE
 Tuesday, April 15 • 10 a.m.-3 p.m.
 EECA headquarters • 1732 Finney Road, Murphysboro

SPRING INTO ENERGY SAVINGS

Small Changes = Big Savings!

Switch to LEDs – They use less energy and last longer than incandescent or CFL bulbs.

Adjust Your Thermostat – Try to minimize the difference between indoor and outdoor temps to reduce strain on your HVAC.

Seal Air Leaks – Use caulk, weather-stripping, or foam to keep comfy air inside.

Unplug Unused Devices – Even when off, they can still draw power!

Run Full Loads – Wait to run your dishwasher or washer until they are full, and use cold water.

